



Cambridge Society for the Application of Research

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www.csar.org.uk

INTELLIGENCE AND THE LIVING CELL

Adaptive behaviour and decision-making by living cells

Prof Brian J Ford, President of CSAR

7.30 p.m., Monday 20th October, 2008

The Wolfson Lecture Theatre, Churchill College, Storey's Way, Cambridge

Professor Brian Ford writes:

"Current accounts agree that intelligence is the province of multi-cellular organisms, and that it resides at the synapses of the brain. Today we will see some videos that support a revolutionary view, namely, that the propensity to make far-reaching decisions resides within each living cell. This presentation introduces the idea that the brain has a much more limited role than we imagine, and that microorganisms are capable of remarkable problem-solving abilities. It also suggests that much cerebral function is probably intra- (rather than inter-) neuronal."

Brian J Ford has long believed that our studies of mechanisms that lie deep within the cell are a symptom of the reductionism of our current era. He promotes the view of the cell as an organism, looking at how it behaves, rather than at what goes on inside. His first book on microbiology was published in 1970 and has been followed by papers in journals from *Nature* to *New Scientist*, together a number of other books that have been published internationally. His research has also been the subject of a number of recent lectures he has given in several countries.

Brian is a Fellow of the Institute of Biology, Fellow and Past President of the Association of Past Students of Cardiff University, former Fellow at the Open University and Visiting Professor at Leicester University.

The Organising Secretary adds.....

Once again, another academic year is upon us! This time, I actually had a surfeit of lecturers – so I hope to be able to 'scroll' some of them round into our programme for next year.

The topics this year range from drug discovery to similarities between the way societies of social insects and those of humans behave, with the psychology of gambling somewhere in the middle! A 'balanced' programme, I hope!

Don't Forget: the **Larmor Lecture**, which is held jointly with the CSAR, is on nano-scale optics. The lecturer is Professor Jerry Baumberg, who is, amongst his many skills and talents, a conjurer! I do recommend that you try and attend; please note that the PhilSoc now meets at 5.30pm, and in a new location – our Year Card has more details.

Best Regards

Richard Freeman, CSAR Organising Secretary

Coffee available, as usual, in the foyer outside the lecture theatre from ~7.00 p.m.

For those who would like to become **full members** of the CSAR, **Individual Membership** costs £25 for the academic year. **Family Membership** costs £35 and entitles the Member to bring a guest or member of their family to any meeting. Members are eligible to take part in our exclusive, members-only visits. These are often to places not open to the public. Non-members may attend individual lectures upon payment of a fee of £3.00 each.

If you wish to join and enjoy the many benefits of membership, please complete the following, and return it with payment to a CSAR officer, or post it to Barry Thompson at the address below. Cheques payable to '**Cambridge Society for the Application of Research**' may be handed to one of our officers, or sent by post to: Barry Thompson, Cambridge Enterprise, University of Cambridge, 10 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QA

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